



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

USS DENVER (LPD-9)

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From: Commanding Officer, USS DENVER (LPD 9)
To: Director of Naval History (OP-09B), Washington Navy Yard,
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Subj: USS DENVER (LPD 9) Command History

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Encl: (1) USS DENVER (LPD 9) Command History

1. Enclosure (1) is forwarded in accordance with reference (a).


V. E. COOKE

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USS DENVER (LPD 9)

1979 COMMAND HISTORY

The new year found USS DENVER in San Diego, California enjoying a holiday leave and upkeep period. On 8 January the ship began a two week period of refresher training followed by two additional weeks of amphibious refresher training commencing 22 January. The month of February was spent preparing for a deployment to the western Pacific which began on 1 March.

The first stop was Pearl Harbor, Hawaii from 9 March through 12 March. After this brief stay, the ship proceeded to Enewetak atoll in the Marshall Island chain. This atoll was once used as a nuclear test site. From 21 March through 26 March, the ship provided wet-well repair services for the boats being used in the cleanup effort prior to the atoll being returned to the Marshallese people. For her efforts, the ship was awarded her second Humanitarian Service Medal.

Upon the early completion of the wet-well repair effort at Enewetak, DENVER proceeded to Okinawa, Japan arriving 4 April. On 7 April, she sailed with a complement of Marines and arrived at Numazu, Japan on 10 April. The first real liberty port for the crew was Shimoda, Japan from 12 April through 15 April. On 16 April the ship entered Yokosuka, Japan for a very successful upkeep period. Pusan, Republic of Korea was the next liberty port from 7 May until 10 May.

DENVER acted as the support ship for elements of a Naval Construction Battalion, a U.S. Marine Corps work force and naval aviation units from 15 May through 17 May. These forces were used in the construction of an aerial bombing and naval gunfire support range on the small Japanese island of Okino Daito Shima.

With various U.S. Marine Corps elements embarked, the ship got underway on 22 May for Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines. Inport on 25 May, DENVER began an upkeep period. During the upkeep the command coordinated the preparation for a bilateral, multiservice amphibious exercise. This operation, EXERCISE TEMPO CAPER II, lasted from 7 June through 13 June. The operation was held at the Botolan Peninsula, Republic of the Philippines. Participating in the exercise were Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine units from the United States and the Republic of the Philippines.

Upon the completion of EXERCISE TEMPO CAPER II, DENVER conducted an administrative lift of U.S. Marine Corps elements from Numazu arriving in Okinawa on 25 June. Here she captured the Amphibious Ready Group Bravo Professional Olympics title during the week of 26 June through 28 June. For the next two days, she participated in an Amphibious Squadron Seven loading and landing exercise. From 2 July until 5 July, DENVER was involved in a second administrative lift from Okinawa to Numazu. She returned to Yokosuka for an upkeep period which lasted from 6 July through 29 July.

In late July, the ship departed Yokosuka and returned to Okinawa on 2 August. After loading a complement of Marines, DENVER, in company with USS BLUE RIDGE, transitted to Hong Kong for a port visit from 6 August through 9 August. On

Enclosure (1)

10 August she got underway for Subic Bay for rehearsals of the impending fleet exercise FORTRESS GALE to be conducted 14 August through 28 August. FORTRESS GALE was a mock invasion of Okinawa involving 40,000 sailors and Marines, 26 ships and 280 combat aircraft.

On 1 September, the ship and other units from Amphibious Squadron Seven began the journey to their homeport of San Diego, California. She made a brief stop at Pearl Harbor on 11 September to pick up male dependents of DENVER personnel for a Tiger Cruise. The squadron arrived in San Diego on 21 September. The next 30 days were reserved for leave and upkeep.

The remainder of 1979 was spent conducting routine operations in the southern California operating areas and inport maintenance. Highlights from this period included a squadron port visit to San Francisco, California on 26 October through 29 October. More than 2,000 visitors toured the ship. DENVER was also assigned as visit ship at Broadway Pier in San Diego on 17 November and 18 November. Over 2,500 viewers were hosted that weekend. From 28 November through 6 December, she participated in the filming of the feature length motion picture, "Raise the Titanic".

Enclosure (1)